THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY): (a) As informed by the Bharat Aluminium Company Limited (BALCO), M/S R. K. Transport Company was awarded contract on 11.12.1999 and 29.4.2002 for mining and transportation of bauxite from the Company's mines at Mainpat to its alumina plant at Korba.

(b) to (d) BALCO has informed that the tenure of both the contracts are over. However, M/s R.K. Transport Company had filed applications for appointment of Arbitrator under Section 11 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 in the Hon'ble High Court of Chhattisgarh for settlement of disputes relating to payments for the contracts mentioned above and hence the matter is sub-judice.

Task force for socio-economic condition of muslims

126. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a task force appointed by Government to suggest a roadmap for improving the socio-economic condition of muslim minority community, has submitted its recommendations to Government;

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations made by the task force; and

(c) the follow-up action taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) to (c): An inter-ministerial Task Force to examine the implications of the geographical distribution of minorities in India was set up on 2nd March, 2007 with the following terms of reference:—

(i) To identify towns/cities having substantial concentration of minority population requiring special attention;

(ii) to formulate multi-sectoral plan for provision of basic civic amenities such as housing, schools and educational facilities, health facilities and employment opportunities for urban localities having substantial concentration of minority population within such towns/cities;

(iii) To identify existing schemes/programmes from which funds could be channelised to such urban localities for implementation of multi-sectoral plans;

(iv) To suggest schemes for funding the resource gap of projects included in the multi-sectoral plan and also for funding specific projects which are sot covered under any of the existing scheme/programme.

The Task Force has submitted its report only on 8th November, 3007.

Welfare schemes for minorities

127. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal during the last three years to address the problems being faced by minorities, especially the muslims;

(b) if so, the details thereof especially in Andhra Pradesh; and

(c) the steps Government had taken for the welfare of muslims during the last three years in each State?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) to (c) the Government had set up a High Level Committee (popularly known as Sachar Committee) on 9th March, 200S to prepare a report on the social, economic and educational status of the Muslim community of India. A statement on the follow up action on the recommendations of the Sachar Committee has been laid on the Table of the House on 31.8.2007.

Further, Prime Minister's New 15-Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities was announced in June, 2006. The 15 Point Programme is a policy statement of the Government regarding:

(i) enhancing opportunities for education.

(ii) ensuring an equitable share for minorities in economic activities and employment, through existing and new schemes, enhanced credit support for self-employment and recruitment to State and Central Government jobs.

(iii) improving the conditions of living of minorities by ensuring an appropriate share for them in infrastructure development schemes.

(iv) Prevention and control of communal disharmony and violence.

The programme envisages, wherever possible, earmarking of 15% of targets and outlays for the minorities under the schemes included in the programme and considered amenable to earmarking.

All these schemes and initiatives are directed towards improving the welfare of the minorities throughout the country including Muslims. These are applicable throughout the country, including Andhra Pradesh.

Educational programmes for minority communities

128. SHRI MOTIUR RAHMAN: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any programme to give education to minority communities, particularly muslims;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the quantum of budget allocated for the same?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) to (e) Several educational schemes/programmes have been formulated for the minorities, including Muslims. Some of them are a merit-cum-means scholarship for technical and professional courses, a post-matric scholarship and a pre-matric scholarship scheme each for which suitable provisions have been made for 2007-08. In addition to these, the Maulana Azad Education Foundation implements educational schemes. Its corpus has been doubled to Rs. 200 crore and a provision of Rs. 50 crore has been made in 2007-08 to further enhance the corpus.

These exclusive schemes for the minorities are in addition to the schemes of the Ministry of Human Resource Development for augmenting the educational facilities for the minorities\, particularly Muslims.